The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, happenings in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1912, at the Post-office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1100, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 31, 1918.

AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

VOL. 12. NO. 17. WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, JULY 15, 1922. WHOLE NO. 588.

SHIP SUBSIDY ADVOCATES USE ANY METHOD TO WIN

New York, July 15.—"Slapdash methods" and unsupported assertions of ship subsidy advocates will not convert the thinking public, says the Nautical Gazette, "America's Oldest Shipping Weekly."

The editor shows that "slapdash methods" have been used by the majority members of the house merchant marine committee in recommending the passage of this bill. The committee's policy, says the editor, "is not calculated to make converts for the administration's shipping legislation."

"If our merchant marine were the only one with a large amount of idle tonnage, and if foreign ship owners were experiencing no difficulty in keeping their ships profitably employed, there might be some ground for asking that the equalization of American and alien vessels' operating costs would result in much of our idle tonnage being again placed in commission.

"But is well known that a large percentage of the world's merchant fleet is unemployed. For example, in the case of France, Spain and Belgium, considerably two-fifths and one-half, respectively, of the total available national tonnage is tied up because remunerative cargoes are not procurable.

"Until the present depression passes, shipping, whether conducted under our own or any other flag, is not going to yield a large return. Whether the subsidy bill is adopted or rejected by congress, there is not going to be much of a demand for the government's ships while no foreign vessels exist now for the profitable employment of tonnage. There is no justification, therefore, for the majority members of the house in recommending the passage of this bill. The committee's policy, says the editor, "is not calculated to make converts for the administration's shipping legislation."

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HIGH-COST REASONS RARELY REFERRED TO

New York, July 15.—"The cost of production is not solely determined by the mechanical pay roll. Fictitious capital, over-capitalization and over-capitalization enhances the cost of production quite as than wages," says the Lithographers' Journal.

"Average earnings have fallen nearly 50 per cent since October, 1920, with scant prospects at this time for material improvement. Beginning with March, 1922, figures compiled by the department of labor show that the cost of living is on the upward trend.

"Mr. Intermyer, counsel of the Lockwood committee, has stated that 'building contractors charge customers from 30 to 50 per cent more than the workers are getting. For instance, workers who get 75 cents an hour are charged for at the rate of $3.

"In protected industries wages have been reduced long ago, while selling prices have been advanced again recently. A federal trade commission has charged the St. Louis wholesale grocers' association and the Wisconsin wholesale grocers' association with having threatened to boycott anyone interfering who do not guarantee their products against decline in prices.

"A number of industrial combinations, including the united typothetae, have been charged with price fixing, which is not an indication of bringing prices down.

"Another way manufacturers, and not wages, is responsible for the high cost of living."

RAILROAD MEN STICK.

Hagerstown, Md., July 15.—The 2,000 striking employes of the Western Maryland railroad have made a record to date that cannot be surpassed—not one desertion in four months.

The strike started March 25 last when a private contracting concern had taken over the road's repair work, reduced wages 15 to 20 per cent, lengthened hours from eight to 10 per day, and destroyed working conditions.

Another crisis arrived when Federal Judge Rose refused to make permanent an injunction against these strikers.

ISSUE MODEL INJUNCTION.

Davis, W. Va., July 15.—Circuit Judge Valentine has issued an injunction against eight locals of the United Mine Workers that will bring joy to every anti-unionist. The order prohibits interference "in any way" with the business of the company. The unionists are also prohibited from "trying to persuade workers from working."

BARBERS ORGANIZE.

Indianapolis, July 15.—Officers of the Journeymen Barbers' International Union report new locals in Santa Cruz, Ventura, Merced and Monterey, Cal., and Chelsea, Mass.

LOSES HIS CITY JOB FOR BOLTING STRIKE

New York, July 15.—The New York World prints this special dispatch, from Middletown, N. Y.:

"William H. Funnell, an employe of the Ontario & Western railroad shops for 15 years, who went out with the strikers and later returned to work, has resigned his position as alderman-at-large and president of the common council.

"This took place while more than 100 striking shopmen were awaited word from him at the foot of the city hall steps. A conference of aldermen was held, and his resignation was demanded by his associates in council. It being stated that five of the number declared, they would not sit with him in his seat, Funnell said:

"I have made a mistake. I regret it deeply and want to do what I can to right the wrong. I have done my fellow workmen."

SHIP SUBSIDY BILL IS PET OF BIG BIZ

Washington, July 15.—The pending ship subsidy bill is "perhaps the greatest question that has come before this congress at this session," declared Congressman Harry on the floor of the house.

"The gentlewoman from Alaska is a member of the committee that has this bill in charge.

"This issue," he declared, "seems to be the one question on which the president of the United States has set his heart, and on which he is determined to drive congress through to the ding of the bell. On the soldier bonus and many questions of great importance to the people he is like a dumb man, with voiceless, and announces that he does not believe in executive intervention to congress. But on this question, involving vast grants of money and favors to vast interests, he reverses himself and uses both persuasion and threats to control congress.

"Neither the president nor the shipping board has at all departed from the people to propose or indorse this bill," said the speaker, who refused to hearings before the merchant marine committee in which Wm. Harper D. Saltonstall, general manager of the American steamship owners' association, acknowledged that the house committee "that would give the details and data for the study and preparation of this bill."

The general manager also testified that it was upon the recommendation of himself and associates that Messrs. Smull, Love and Frey were appointed members of the United States shipping board, which will have unlimited power if the subsidy bill passes.

"Mark you," said Congressman Hardy, "that these three members officials of the shipping board, two receive $15,000 and one $25,000 a year, and for whom? And by whom? By the ship-owners' association, the beneficiaries under this legislation."

FOOD COSTS INCREASE.

Washington, July 15.—The bureau of labor statistics reports that during the period from May 15, 1922, to June 15, 1922, food costs increased an average of 1.5 of 22 representative cities:

Newark, New York and Pittsburgh, 3 per cent; Bridgeport, Chicago, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Milwaukee and Norfolk, 2 per cent; Baltimore, Dallas, Fall River, New Haven, Philadelphia, Richmond and Scranton, 1 per cent.

Manchester, Norfolk and Providence increased less than five-tenths of 1 per cent. No change was reported in Atlanta.

LABOR LOSES LONG FIGHT.

Chicago, July 15.—After a campaign that lasted two and one-half years the constitutional convention of the state has abandoned labor's proposal to insert in the organic act of Illinois a declaration that labor is entitled to share property and that injunction judges are prohibited from interfering with the normal activities of the workers, acting through their trade unions.

HUGE PROFITS IN BANKS.

New York, July 15.—An accounting of the estate of Charles D. Barney, founder of the banking firm of Brown Bros. & Co., who died in 1915, shows that the deceased's share of the firm's 1919 profits was $36,870. This was outside his salary, which was $40,000 a year.

CENSORSHIP ENLARGES.

Albany, N. Y., July 15.—The state motion picture censorship board has the power to pass judgment on news reels of current events, according to a decision by the appellate division of the supreme court.

UNION OFFICIAL INJURED.

York, Pa., July 15.—Edwin Gentzler, secretary of the National Association of Printers and Color Workers, was injured fatally when an auto accident near this city. His family was also badly injured.

DISTANT PASTURES LOOK GREEN TO ORGANIZED LABOR'S CRITICS

New York, July 15.—"Most of our radicals, even those who derive their entire socialist gospel from the columns of the New York Nation and the New Republic, are accustomed to gauge the American labor movement by the European yardstick," says N. H. Shub, writing in Justice, official magazine of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' union on "The A. F. of L. and Its Radical Critics."

"They will not understand that the American labor movement is developing according to its own laws; that the problems which confront the American labor movement are different from the European and must be solved in a totally different manner.

"Not only communists but many of the 'right' socialists in America can not still wean themselves away from the idea that the labor movement is a self-sufficing phenomenon with an objective of its own, but that it is a means for another end. In the eyes of the first, this end is communism, while the others believe it to be socialism.

"No matter what we may think of the trade union movement and the role it may eventually play in the reconstruction process of society upon socialist precepts, it is time, nevertheless, that we recognize the fact that all that is the object for which unions are formed and maintained by the masses of their members is not to reconstruct society but to improve the condition of the working masses today.

"Individual leaders and theoreticians of the labor movement will have the right to think and believe that the ultimate aim of the labor movement is the abolition of wage slavery. They may even write this down in black and white in the by-laws of the trade unions. The working masses who belong to the union, however, care little for the distant future. To them the union is valuable inasmuch as it improves their conditions of life today or at least in the very near future.

"Such is the point of view with regard to labor unions not only of the communists, but also in America, but also of the socialist workers of Germany, France and other capitalistic countries in Europe.

"Whoever recognizes the importance of improving the condition of the workers today—and this is recognized by even the extreme radicals—must accept the trade union movement as it is and judge it inasmuch as it fulfills its own purpose.

"Every union is progressive which can best defend the interests of the workers in a given industry, regardless whether its secretary or president believe in the dictatorship of the proletariat or not."

EVOLUTION WRECKED APPRENTICE SYSTEM

Chicago, July 15.—"Employers for the most part do not find it profitable to employ apprentices," writes Harry A Stone, of the Philadelphia builders' exchange and employers' association, in the Constructor, published in this city. Mr. Stone is secretary of the labor commission of the Philadelphia organization and dissents from those who flippantly blame labor unions for the decline of the apprentice system. He says the evolution of the industry is more to blame for conditions than to definite restrictions or to the disinclination of young men to enter the trades.

"The new apprenticeship system," he says, "must be built up on a basis which, fully recognizes the revolutionary changes of the past few years. Employers for the most part do not find it profitable to employ apprentices. In certain cases their presence on actual construction work tends to slow down the work of journeymen. The individual employer, unless actuated by a strong sense of responsibility toward the future of his trade, is unwilling—and in many cases financially unable—to provision for the employment of apprentices, and at best finds it difficult to provide such steady employment as will acquaint young men to take up the training.

"This must be met by a system under which trade organizations shall assume the responsibility for the training of apprentices and their placement with individual employers, thus insuring continuity of employment for apprentices."

APPEAL FOR STRIKERS.

Washington, July 15.—Complying with instructions by the A. F. of L. convention, President Harding has issued an appeal in behalf of the United Textile Workers of America, the Quarry Workers' International union and the International Granite Cutters' Association. The textile workers have 40,000 members on strike in New England against a 20 per cent wage cut ordered in January to take effect on December 20, 1920, the mill owners cut wages 22½ per cent.

The quarry workers are resisting the anti-union shop.

The granite cutters are fighting wage cuts.

"These three organizations are fighting for wages," says President Gompers. "With no financial means of their own, they are unquestionably entitled to such little help we can win," is their message. Merely contributions by individuals who are able should come to the rescue. Fighters on the firing line are asking for help to support themselves, but for the cause, so that they may win the battle for a common enemy, the merciless, greedy, anti-union exploiters."

RAIL INCOMES INCREASE.

Washington, July 15.—Railroad returns for May show a marked increase, as compared with the same month last year, with a complete report filed with the interstate commerce commission reveal net profits of 4.36 per cent on the tentative valuation of the roads.

This return has been made with the railroads given a free hand in the expenditure of money, the letter of contracts to individual contractors and the setting of salaries for "executives" that in many cases exceed the salary paid the president of the United States.

CANADIAN UNIONS TO MEET.

Montreal, Can., July 15.—Wage reductions, in some instances in violation of the industrial disputes act, will be considered at a special meeting of the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress to be held in this city starting August 21. Another grievance is the government's immigration policy, which has removed restrictions in the face of unprecedented unemployment.

BRICK MAKERS UNITE.

Taylor, Ohio, July 15.—Brick and clay workers at this place have organized and affiliated with the United Brick and Clay Workers of America.

MINERS GIVEN BIG AID.

New York, July 15.—The International Ladies' Garment Workers' union has voted $100,000 to striking coal miners.

TEAMSTERS ORGANIZE.

Murphysboro, Ill., July 15.—An affiliate of the Brotherhood of Teamsters has been organized at this place.

BAKERS MAKE GAINS.

Cincinnati, July 15. — Organized bakers in this city are successful in negotiating a new wage contract.

Forced Arbitration Attacked By Bosses

Melbourne, Australia, July 15.—The theory of compulsory arbitration is no longer favored by many employers, who now declare it "is the strongest party."

This viewpoint is expressed in a recent issue of the Industrial Australian and Mining Standard, which made this statement, under the heading, "Industrial Arbitration Farce":

"Many industries which compulsory arbitration binds as with hoops of steel, are now being slowly strangled by compulsion to pay high wages for reduced hours of labor, which is also by law bolstered with the arbitration court. The arbitration court is a dead, drooping limb on the industrial tree. As such it should be cut away."

WOULD CUT SHIP BOARD.

Washington, July 15.—Senator Borah would cut the shipping board membership reduced from seven to five members, at present salaries. These commissioners are paid an annual salary of $12,000.

"We are told that we must get rid of these ships, even if we have to pay a large bonus to some one take them," said Senator Borah. "Why not get rid of some commissioners, who now draw big salaries, if some objections to them—but solely in the interest of economy? I am sure that the whole country is demanding relief from tax burdens, neither conscience nor economy would place permit this waste of money in high and unnecessary salaries."

ENGINES ARE DANGEROUS.

Philadelphia, July 15.—Elimination of the camel-back type of locomotive, in which members of the state engineer's condition became was discussed by railroad commissioners at their meeting here. responsibility for the Reading railroad wreck at Winslow Junction, in which seven persons were killed and 64 injured. It was claimed that the engineer was stricken by a fainting spell before the train was wrecked. The fireman was ignorant of the engineer's condition because of the locomotive's peculiar structure.

SIGN AGREEMENTS.

New Haven, Conn., July 15.—The bakers' and the barbers' unions have signed agreements with employers.

EXPOSE RAIL MANAGERS.

Cumberland, Md., July 15.—Leon H. Brown, colored cook from Baltimore, told city authorities how he and companions were enticed into going to the Baltimore & Ohio station at Baltimore to secure transportation to this city, where they would secure employment on "public work." When they arrived here they were hustled into the Baltimore & Ohio yards and put to work on the railroad tracks that if they ventured forth a terrible fate awaited them. Brown said he and the other men were fed on scanty meals for about 100 men, who were in New York ordered January 12 last. On December 20, 1920, the mill owners cut wages 22½ per cent.

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The granite cutters are fighting wage cuts.

"These three organizations are fighting for wages," says President Gompers. "With no financial means of their own, they are unquestionably entitled to such little help we can win," is their message. Merely contributions by individuals who are able should come to the rescue. Fighters on the firing line are asking for help to support themselves, but for the cause, so that they may win the battle for a common enemy, the merciless, greedy, anti-union exploiters."

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APPEAL FOR LUMBER PRICES GO UP.

Seattle, July 15.—The price of lumber and lumber products is high and will go higher, while the lumber workers will attempt to make the 10-hour day general, declare officers of the International Union of Timber Workers.

"Wage increases have been few and far between. The employers have been able to meet the specially unorganized and that they are able to do so gives them a power to dictate wages and working conditions. In some places in the northwest they have gone back to the 9-hour basis, and 10-hour day. This condition is going to be met by the lack of organization on the part of the workers."

Officers of the International Union of Timber Workers are making heroic efforts to interest those workers in organization. This work has been retarded by the "unfortunate" condition known as the loyal legion of loggers and lumbermen.

ROAD BLAMED FOR WRECK.

Asbury, N. J., July 15.—The New York & Long Branch railroad was found guilty of criminal negligence by a jury because of the wreck here on July 4 in which three men were killed.

The deaths were caused, the verdict read, because the railroad failed to "properly maintain" the tracks and provide adequate protection and facilities to its patrons. The conviction of the accident is inevitable if the railroad continues to use a single platform for handling both inbound traffic, and more lives will be sacrificed."

BUILDERS SIGN.

Buffalo, N. Y., July 15.—The Philadelphia street car company's "union" is aiding the local street car company to break the strike here, despite anti-union pledges, it was given wide publicity, and its usefulness in the present instance indicates the reason for its "popularity."

FIREMEN RAISE WAGES.

Detroit, Mich., July 15.—Organized firemen employed on the city street railway system have secured a wage increase of 25 cents an hour. Arrangements will be made to establish the six-day week.

SHOP MEN'S SOLIDARITY SHOCKS RAIL MANAGERS

Chicago, July 15.—The railroad shop men's strike has confounded the prophets and seers who were sure "there will be no strike," and who predicted the walkout would not be general.

That the strike is effective, is indicated by the number of trains being abandoned, and by the shouts for "law and order" as a preliminary for troops and injunctions.

The strikers are the same ones who kept the rolling stock of railroads in order during the war. They were highly patriotic then. Now they are pictured as holding up mail trains and pursuing other bandit tactics.

These charges, which have so often proved successful, seem to have been worn thread bare, as the strikers refuse to be stampeded back to work. That there are disorders, no one denies, but the strikers ask why the private detectives employed by railroads are not investigated.

As the strike continues, the rolling stock of railroads is falling to pieces and the chances of the strike extending increases. In former shop strikes the railroad would send its rolling stock to other shops, but this is impossible in the present strike, which is nation-wide.

The shop men have developed a solidarity that is unexcelled, and reaches railroads that obliterated unionism in their shops 10 years ago. These shops are now 100 per cent with the strikers.

Railway Emissaries Blamed by Unionist

Washington, July 15.—"Much of the violence in connection with the railroad shop men's strike can be traced to the railroads," declared Wm. H. Johnston, president of the International Association of Machinists.

"A great many rail systems employ what is known as 'strikebreakers,' " said the trade unionist. "These operators mingle with strikers, ostensibly in sympathy with their cause and very frequently precipitate serious disturbances. The strikers then are charged with being a lawless lot.

"During railroad strikes in 1910 and 1911, several of our members were charged with attempted destruction or railway property and thrown into jail. Investigation resulted in the arrest of one man who had in his possession dynamite caps and a watch. It was disclosed, on the witness stand, was the prime mover in the disturbances, and for two years had been in the employ of the railroad which charged unionists with destroying property.

"In view of our own experiences with these operators, or private detectives, we naturally feel that when strikers are accused of crime it is always well to determine precisely who has been responsible for the commission of the crime."

WAGE AWARD ENRAGES AUSTRALIAN WORKERS

Melbourne, Australia, July 15.—The wage motion of Federal Arbitration Judge Powers has enraged not only the pastoral workers, who are victims of the award, but the entire Australian trade union movement.

The award is declared to be "a mockery of the facts and figures submitted," and has even astounded the wool kings, who in this case are very frequently precipitate admissions of guilt. The strikers then are charged with being a lawless lot.

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COSSACKS ARE ACTIVE.

Pueblo, Col., July 15.—State cossacks are camping on the picket line in the coal fields of this state, according to district No. 15, United Mine Workers, whose locals were mobilized in Fremont county, where the heaviest mining in radicals are going to dynamite the mines."

"The whole trouble," said the miners' official, "is that the men are leaving the mines by the hundreds and the coal owners are desperate. There has been no trouble up there since they left the mines unless it is started by outsiders."

WOMEN'S RIGHTS LAW WINS.

Milwaukee, Wis., July 15.—A temporary law, passed by the last year by the state legislature, has been upheld here in the case of a teacher discharged under the law forbidding married women to teach. The teacher was ordered reinstated, the court holding that women are no longer be discriminated against, regardless of their marital condition.

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The Potency of Labor Education.

By Dr. CHARLES A. BEARD.

In our individual lives, our course of action seems as much determined by things that are thrust upon us by unforeseen circumstances as by our own little plans and schemes. So in the labor movement. Having its roots far down in the life of millions of people, being interwoven with the very fabric of civilization, it partakes of the character of a huge natural process, swinging forward under the stress of relentless circumstances that will not be denied. It may have little philosophy, like that of Mr. Gompers, or it may laugh at all philosophies and think mainly of hours and wages. Still, in the modern world, crises are forced upon it by circumstances, and it is compelled to make momentous decisions on matters unrelated to collective bargaining.

The labor movement, in the modern sense, is barely 50 years old. But think of the crises it has had to leaders has arisen before the train was wrecked. The fireman was ignorant of the engineer's condition because of the locomotive's peculiar structure.

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Congress Lacks Courage To Face Rail Issue

Washington, July 12.—This congress lacks the courage to present a remedy for the railroad situation declared Congressman Huddleston, of Alabama, on the floor of the house. The speaker made this reference to the house committee on interstate and foreign commerce, of which he is a member.

"The committee has not yet found out that transportation act of 1920 needs to be remedied. Our committee has been charged with the iniquities of the way in which rates are made, or the grouping system or of the immunity which the railroads are under section 15A. But the people of this country have forgotten who they know what was done to them.

"The transportation act of 1920 was new been a law for only two years. For the first six months of that time the treasury of the United States the basis of rates, waste, management and inefficiency and the wicked ness of railroad management. At the end of the six months that burden was passed to the people in an increase in railroad rates averaging about 23 1-3 per cent. Under that burden, intended to yield to the railroads from fifteen to eighteen hundred millions of dollars, the people have reeled until this time.

"Their complaints have been met by the majority in control of congress by the promise of the passage of bills designed to remedy the wrong that was done them. The house committee on trade was charged by the president with the duty of investigating the whole matter. Months have passed by and the committee has not yet reported a single measure to relieve the people.

"Oh, they say, the law has not been thoroughly tried. We have not tested out the transportation act of 1920. We do not know how it is going to work. Let us give it a little more time for operation.

"The same gentlemen are saying that now who said, when the Esch-Cummins bill was being considered in the house, 'It is a great constructive measure.

"We know what that means. All of the gentlemen who voted for this time at the next session of congress to consider these matters. All of the gentlemen that say today that the committee has interposed a plea of bankruptcy to the claim for relief that the people have upon them.

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AS AN EMPLOYER, PUBLIC BOARDS MAY CONTRACT WITH UNIONISTS

Chicago, July 12.—In a brief prepared by Victor A. Olander, secretary of the state federation of labor, in the trade union cases decisions by the state supreme court, justifying the discharge of union teachers, to sustain the organized labor's demand that the commissioners of this county give preference to organized workers, and to residents of the county.

In his brief Secretary Olander called attention to a decision by the state supreme court in the case of a Chicago school teacher who was discharged because she belonged to a trade union. In upholding the board of education in its dismissal of the teacher, the supreme court said:

"The board is not bound to give any reason for its action. It is free to contract with whomsoever it chooses. Neither the constitution nor the statute places any restrictions upon this right of the board to contract, and there is not any grievance which the courts will recognize. Courts cannot control the board of education relative to the determination of the board, and when they have once been determined by it, the courts will not inquire into their propriety."

"The plain meaning of the decision," said Secretary Olander, "is that the state, acting through one of its agencies, the board of education of Chicago, in the adoption of the rule referred to, did not act in its sovereign capacity, but simply acted as an employer or party to a contract. The difference is of course, of vital importance.

"It will be conceded by everyone, we believe, that the state legislature, representing the state in its sovereign capacity, has no power under the constitution to enact a law of general application as effecting all it is competent to make a law similar to the rule adopted by the Chicago board of education which said application the teachers employed by that board.

"If the legislature, the supreme law making body of the state, fails to enact a bill declaring it unlawful for any teacher belonging to a union, as were prescribed by the rule of the Chicago board of education and above referred to, would such act be constitutional? Certainly not.

"Here is it, then, that a body of education, h subordinate agency of the state, has the power to declare such a rule as effecting the teachers employed under its jurisdiction?

"The answer is, of course, that the board was acting as an employer and in this capacity it had the same right as any other employer.

Secretary Olander made this reference to the "lowest bidder" feature of public contracts:

"When the lowest bidder on a construction job under the Jurisdiction of a public board is permitted to employ men at wages, hours of labor and conditions that are below the standard established by the industry, it is placing upon the taxpayers of the community a cost that is unfair and unjust.

"The best interests of the taxpayers, who by the way, include members of organized labor, and resident labor, therefore require that the public work within the county should be done in accord with the proper standards that are sought to maintain and develop skill and efficiency so necessary to truly economic production of all kinds."

Oriental Seamen Endanger Life and Property

Chicago, July 16.—Shipping Journals continue to discuss the sinking of the steamer Prince of Wales in British liner Egypt, and the cowardly behavior of her Lascar crew, which resulted in the death of nearly 100 persons. The Seamen's Journal calls attention to this editorial from the Scientific American, published in New York city:

"It is to be hoped that the question of the employment of passenger-carrying vessels will, in the near future, be removed from the realm of opinion to a matter of life and death to immediate parties concerned, be made a bone of contention between capital and labor, and the owner take the point of view he accepted the better it will be for both the companies and the public."

"The La Follette seamen's act of 1915," says the Seamen's Journal, "is the nearest approach to a single demand for greater safety of life at sea.

"Under the terms of that law 65 per cent of the deck crew must be men with at least three years' experience on deck. The same law requires that 75 per cent of the crew in each department of the ship must be able to understand the language of the officers.

These requirements have been called union labor exactions. As a matter of plain, common sense, however, they are safety provisions, pure and simple.

"The fact remains that American ship owners, with but few exceptions, have never taken kindly to the provisions of the seamen's act. As a result the enforcement of this law has always been lax. Under its provisions seamen have frequently protested, but without success.

"American seamen, through their international affiliations, have endeavored to have the standards of seamen of other countries to demand the enactment of similar laws. This effort has, however, met with anticipated success, because neither irresponsible, radical nor the seamen's unions nor in ship owners' circles can find any merit in laws for greater safety of life at sea.

"So it is gratifying to know that at least one other American shipping paper with, may be the Journal in the fight for the compulsory employment of skilled seamen and for a manning policy that will make safety of life its first and primary consideration."